

## Research article

เกินไปกว่าองค์ประกอบทางสถาปัตยกรรม : กรณีศึกษา จิตรกรรมฝาเพดาน ในโครงการออกแบบ  
ปรับปรุงอาคาร คณะบริหารธุรกิจ มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีราชมงคลอีสาน นครราชสีมา

Beyond an Architectural Element: A Case Study of the ceiling Painting in the  
Renovation of the Faculty of Business Administration,  
Rajamangala University of Technology Isan, Nakhon Ratchasima

ดวงนภา ศิลปสาย<sup>1</sup>

Duangnapa Sinlapasai<sup>1</sup>

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### บทคัดย่อ

ในฐานะสถาปนิกผู้ออกแบบปรับปรุงอาคารคณะบริหารธุรกิจ มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีราชมงคลอีสาน ซึ่ง 'จิตรกรรมฝาเพดาน' เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของโครงการนี้ งานวิจัยนี้ได้ทำการศึกษา 'จิตรกรรมฝาเพดาน' ซึ่งเป็นการใช้รูปแบบงานศิลปะสาธารณะ บูรณาการเข้ากับการออกแบบปรับปรุงอาคารคณะบริหารธุรกิจ จิตรกรรมที่นำมาใช้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อสร้างสภาพแวดล้อม (built environment) ให้เกิดกับการใช้งานจริง ซึ่งสอดคล้องกับแนวคิดของนอร์เบิร์ก-ซูลซ์ (Norberg-Schulz) ที่ว่าพื้นที่ที่มนุษย์สร้าง (human-made spaces) ขึ้นมานั้นมักจะมีการครอบครองผ่านการใช้งานในรูปแบบที่แตกต่างกันไปเป็นปกติ และจะมีการให้ความหมายอย่างลึกซึ้งตามแต่ละพื้นที่ งานวิจัยนี้จึงต้องการศึกษาว่าศิลปะสาธารณะสามารถส่งผลกระทบอย่างมีนัยสำคัญต่อประสบการณ์ของมนุษย์ได้อย่างไร การส่งเสริมอัตลักษณ์ วัฒนธรรม และแรงบันดาลใจภายในบริบททางการศึกษาอย่างไร

ผลการศึกษาชี้ให้เห็นว่า 'จิตรกรรมฝาเพดาน' ในอดีตมักถูกใช้กับอาคารทางศาสนา ปัจจุบันจึงถูกมองเป็นว่านวัตกรรมทางสถาปัตยกรรมที่ส่งเสริมอัตลักษณ์และบรรยากาศให้กับอาคารการศึกษา ช่วยส่งเสริมการแก้ปัญหาาร่วมกันของบุคลากรในองค์กร ส่งเสริมการมีส่วนร่วมแบบสหวิทยาการ กระตุ้นโครงการของนักศึกษา เสริมสร้างแบรนด์หรือภาพจำและความพยายามทางการตลาดของสถาบัน ผ่านการสร้างสรรค์ผลิตภัณฑ์ที่เกี่ยวข้อง นอกจากนี้การดำเนินโครงการที่มีความร่วมมือกันยังช่วยเสริมสร้างการจัดการความรู้ (knowledge management) ภายในมหาวิทยาลัยได้เป็นอย่างดี ทั้งในด้านการส่งเสริมการตัดสินใจ การเพิ่มนวัตกรรมและประสิทธิภาพ ลดการสูญเสียความรู้ และส่งเสริมชุมชนแห่งการปฏิบัติ

ผลการศึกษาสรุปว่าการผสมผสานงาน "จิตรกรรม" ให้เป็นหนึ่งองค์ประกอบทางสถาปัตยกรรมในปัจจุบัน เป็นการนำเสนอแนวทางการออกแบบที่สร้างพลวัตให้กับสถาปัตยกรรม รวมถึงการสร้างคุณค่าและมูลค่า ช่วยยกระดับการเรียนการสอนบนพื้นที่จริง การเรียนรู้และการมีส่วนร่วมของหลายส่วน นอกจากการวิเคราะห์เชิงคุณภาพแล้ว การศึกษานี้ยังเน้นย้ำถึง

<sup>1</sup> คณะสถาปัตยกรรมศาสตร์และศิลปกรรมสร้างสรรค์ มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีราชมงคลอีสาน นครราชสีมา

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Architecture and Creative Art, Rajamangala University of Technology Isan, Nakhon Ratchasima

ผู้ติดต่อประสานงาน (Corresponding Author) email: duangnapa.si@rmuti.ac.th

ความจำเป็นในการค้นคว้าเชิงประจักษ์เพิ่มเติมเพื่อประเมินผลกระทบที่มีลักษณะเฉพาะเจาะจงต่อการเรียนรู้ พฤติกรรม และประสิทธิภาพการทำงานของผู้ใช้ เติบโตขึ้นในอนาคต

**คำสำคัญ:** ศิลปะสาธารณะ การแทรกแซงทางสถาปัตยกรรม การปรับปรุงอาคาร อัตลักษณ์พื้นที่ การจัดการความรู้

## Abstract

This study, conducted by an architect involved in the renovation project, examines 'The Ceiling Painting' initiative—a public art installation integrated into the renovation of the Faculty of Business Administration (BA) Building at Rajamangala University of Technology Isan (RMUTI). This project addresses the purely utilitarian function often ascribed to the built environment, aligning with Norberg-Schulz's assertion that human-made spaces possess inherent structure and embody profound meanings. The research investigates how public art can significantly impact human experience by fostering identity, culture, and inspiration within an educational context.

Findings indicate that 'The Ceiling Painting' ----an intervention historically reserved for religious structures---- has evolved into an innovative architectural feature that defines the identity and ambiance of the BA Building. Beyond its aesthetic value, this installation actively fosters problem-solving, stimulates collaborative student projects, and drives interdisciplinary engagement. Furthermore, the project's collaborative implementation has *substantially* contributed to knowledge management within the university by enhancing decision-making, increasing innovation and efficiency, reducing knowledge loss, and fostering a community of practice.

The study concludes that integrating painting with architectural elements offers a dynamic and enriching design approach that profoundly enhances teaching, practical learning experiences, and community engagement. While providing a robust qualitative analysis, the study highlights the need for further empirical investigation to quantitatively evaluate its specific impact on user learning, behavior, and productivity.

**Keywords:** Public Art, Architectural Intervention, Building Renovation, Place Identity, Knowledge Management

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Built Environment and the Quest for Meaning

Spaces in Architecture extend beyond mere utilitarian containers for human activity; they are environments endowed with inherent structure and profound meanings. This perspective is particularly crucial in educational contexts, where the deliberate design of the built environment plays an essential role in shaping learning, fostering creativity, and cultivating a sense of belonging among its occupants. As Norberg-Schulz (1980, p. 50) posits, "The man-made environment... is not a mere practical tool or the result of arbitrary happenings; it has structure and embodies meanings." The pervasive influence of architectural spaces on human experience is the foundational principle critically emphasizes, extending beyond mere utility to encompass aspects of identity, culture, and inspiration.



**Figure 1** *The existing exterior of the buildings of Faculty of Business Administration*

Source: RMUTI (2012)

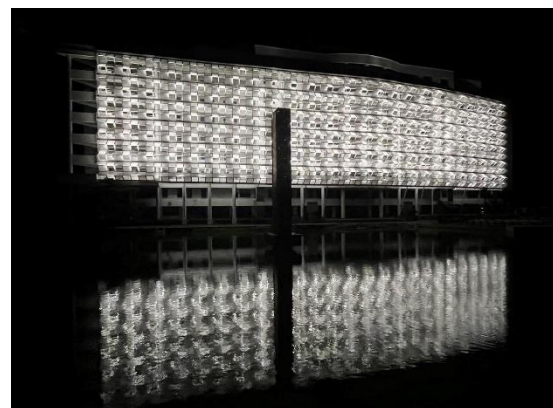


**Figure 2** *New image after renovation on daytime and night time*

This study focuses on a specific intervention: the comprehensive renovation of the Faculty of Business Administration (BA) Building at Rajamangala University of Technology Isan (RMUTI). Erected in 1999, this Modernist structure (Figure 1) served as the university's foundational official building. After decades of service, the building's escalating functional and aesthetic obsolescence necessitated a significant revitalization project. The aim of this renovation was to proactively address these challenges and transform the BA building into a contemporary, highly functional, and inspiring learning environment (Figure 2). While the overall renovation strategically aimed to revitalize the building's aesthetic appearance, both internally and externally, this study specifically delves into an interior intervention involving a key ceiling within the structure.

### **1.2 An Architectural Intervention: 'The Ceiling Painting'**

The conceptualization of a *Ceiling painting* within a Modernist structure, such as the BA building, represents a deliberate and theoretically grounded departure from its antecedent, purely functional design

philosophy. Historically, *ceiling paintings* have functioned as potent architectural elements, as evidenced by their transformative capacity in both traditional Thai temples and the grand frescoes of the European Renaissance (Gombrich, 1995). These artworks fundamentally alter spatial perception, evoking profound senses of awe and expansiveness (Figure 3). By transforming a typically overlooked overhead plane into a captivating canvas, *'The ceiling'* actively redefines the architectural experience of the main hall and space. This intervention transcends its purely structural role to become a dynamic visual landscape, directly addressing Modernism's identified limitations by reintroducing aesthetic depth and cultural resonance into a functional space, thereby imbuing it with narrative and emotional significance.



**Figure 3** (Left) Mural paintings inside Wat Phumin Temple, Nan province (c. 1867–1874). (Right) Michelangelo's Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel, Vatican City, Rome (1534–1541).

A pivotal element of this renovation is the public art known as *'The Ceiling Painting,'* referred to simply as *'The ceiling'* throughout this investigation. Conceived as an academic service project, this architectural intervention was designed to challenge the perception of architecture as solely utilitarian. Its genesis was profoundly informed by observations from a prior academic service project associated with the Thailand Biennale Khorat 2021, which revealed a demonstrable aesthetic deficit within public spaces, particularly pronounced within academic institutions where the instrumental role of aesthetics is frequently undervalued. This aesthetic deficit presented a critical challenge for the university in shaping its learning environment.

The author's observations collected from unique vantage point as a local architect representing RMUTI and a host for Biennale artworks—a significant art event whose impact on attracting local engagement did not meet expectations—highlighted a critical disjunction between the university's established 50-year legacy in art education within the Faculty of Architecture and Creative Art, and the limited dissemination and integration of art within the broader community and its daily lived environments. This anomaly underscores a compelling imperative to bridge this disjunction between academic institutions and the wider public sphere in the promotion and integration of art and aesthetics.

A key innovation involved the strategic integration of public art directly into the architectural elements, with a particular focus on the main hall ceiling. Departing from conventional ceiling materials,

the architects proposed incorporating bespoke 'ceiling paintings' into this central activity hall. This deeply collaborative project engaged a diverse range of stakeholders, including architects, artists, and primary building users such as deans, lecturers, staff, and students. The synergistic integration of art and architecture, therefore, aimed to cultivate a learning environment demonstrably conducive to creativity and inspiration, fostering imagination and collaboration, and ultimately extending the building's functional parameters beyond a purely utilitarian architectural form.

### 1.3 Objective

1) To explore and articulate the significance of *'The ceiling'* painting as an innovative architectural feature that transcends conventional utilitarian functions.

2) To analyze systematically how *'The ceiling'* contributes to the building's distinctive identity and cultivates a unique ambiance.

3) To discuss the mechanisms through which the artistic elements inspire additional creative pursuits and generate tangible benefits for the broader institution.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Architecture, Aesthetics, and the Critique of Modernism

Architecture, as a multifaceted phenomenon, transcends mere physical form to embody profound cultural, social, and aesthetic meanings. This phenomenological perspective positions architecture at the intersection of pure and applied art, serving as a powerful form of communication that shapes human experiences and perceptions (Conway & Roenisch, 2005). Extending this socio-spatial understanding, Harvey (1990) further highlights that architecture not only comprises the physical spaces and temporal dimensions that shape our social lives but is also deeply implicated in processes of social reproduction, functioning to both reflect and shape cultural values and social practices.

Modernism, the dominant architectural movement of the 20th century, fundamentally sought a novel architectural language anchored in functionality, standardization, and innovation, primarily in response to rapid societal and technological shifts (Conway & Roenisch, 2005). The BA building's rectilinear forms, modular fenestration, and open-plan layout are emblematic of core Modernist principles, prioritizing simplicity, efficiency, and functional utility. However, a significant critique leveled against Modernism is its propensity to neglect nuanced societal communication and its frequent failure to adapt comprehensively to specific cultural or environmental contexts (Conway & Roenisch, 2005). As Rieger-Jandl (2006) contends, architecture is intrinsically both structured by and a structuring aspect of culture; consequently, a predominantly functionalist approach risks generating a profound disconnect from the lived experiences and distinct cultural expressions of its inhabitants.

In response to these critiques, key Modernist figures like Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe argued that aesthetics and function were inextricably linked, establishing a precedent that functional design need not preclude emotional resonance. Historically, the integration of art, such as ceiling paintings, into architecture has been a powerful tool for transforming spatial perception, from traditional Thai temples to

the grand frescoes of the Renaissance, fundamentally altering spatial perception and evoking profound senses of awe and expansiveness.

## 2.2 Public Art and the Creation of Place Identity

Place identity, conceptualized as the psychological tie and sense of belonging individuals cultivate with physical environments (Proshansky et al.; 1983 Relph, 1976), encompasses the meanings, affects, and mnemonics associated with a specific locale. Consequently, fostering a robust place identity is paramount for cultivating memorable and distinctive environments. Public art serves as a primary mechanism for imbuing spaces with unique character and emotional resonance (Lynch, 1960). Extending this, Lefebvre (1991) posits that monumental or significant artistic spaces actively contribute to social cohesion by offering each member of a society a tangible "image of that membership" they collectively constitute.

This aligns powerfully with Marc Augé's (1995) seminal concept of "places of identity," which posits that individuals collaboratively shape spatial environments that resonate with their shared values and experiences. By serving as a distinctive landmark, public art can foster community pride, attract visitors, and promote a vibrant campus experience.

In alignment with Augé's concept, the integrated art within the public and architectural spaces at the Faculty of Business Administration at RMUTI has demonstrably increased both its aesthetic appeal and its capacity to foster a robust sense of belonging. The collective efforts of students, faculty members, and alumni have transformed 'The ceiling' and its subsequent ceramic extensions into more than just physical structures; they are living testaments to the community's shared values, aspirations, and experiences. By inhabiting this augmented space, individuals are not only physically located but are also psychologically influenced by its enhanced environmental characteristics, thereby reinforcing a shared identity and strengthening their connection to the place. This collaborative art integration stands as a compelling testament to the enduring transformative capacity of collective action and art's inherent ability to imbue mere space with profound meaning and inspiration.

In this regard, *'The Ceiling Painting'* functions instrumentally in placemaking, serving as a distinctive landmark that attracts students, staff, and visitors, thereby fostering community pride and collective belonging. Its implementation underscores the intrinsic value of art as a dynamic and engaging component of the built environment, actively promoting creativity, cultural immersion, and a vibrant campus experience.

## 2.3 Collaborative Practice and Knowledge Management in Creative Projects

The process of creating public art is as significant as the final product, especially when it involves collaborative initiatives. Such collaborations, engaging diverse stakeholders—including architects, artists, and primary users—can transform an aesthetic addition into a powerful symbol of shared identity and collective belonging. The collaborative genesis of *'The Ceiling Painting'*, involving architects, artists, and faculty members, was instrumental in ensuring its profound resonance with the Faculty of Business Administration community. This participatory methodology elevated the artwork beyond a mere aesthetic enhancement, transforming it into a powerful symbol of shared identity and collective belonging within the university.

This collaborative approach also served as a powerful engine for knowledge management (KM), a strategic process where intellectual capital is identified, shared, and applied to achieve organizational goals. The project's methodology aligns with best practices from frameworks such as the Office of the Official Information Commission Knowledge Management (OICKM), fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation.

The implementation of the project enhanced **decision-making** through open dialogue and collective problem-solving, which led to the creation of innovative solutions for unforeseen challenges. This interdisciplinary collaboration between the Faculty of Architecture and Creative Art, the Faculty of Business Administration, and the Faculty of Engineering and Technology also significantly increased **innovation and efficiency**, culminating in a unique and sophisticated architectural feature. Furthermore, the project effectively exemplified a **Community of Practice (CoP)**, facilitating a dynamic knowledge exchange among individuals with diverse expertise and turning the artistic endeavor into a learning experience that generated new institutional best practices. Finally, this process underscored the importance of **learning from experience**, enabling the university to systematically improve its approach for future interdisciplinary and public art initiatives. KM is therefore a useful strategy for fostering a learning atmosphere within a university like RMUTL.

### 3. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, single-case study methodology to conduct an in-depth analysis of *'The Ceiling Painting'* project. The research process was designed to synthesize theoretical frameworks with empirical observations, utilizing a mixed-methods approach that includes participant-observation, visual analysis, and a literature review. This comprehensive approach allowed for an exploration of how integrating art into architecture can cultivate a more engaging, inspiring, and meaningful learning environment. The methodology also extended to documenting the collaborative initiative where the artwork's conceptual precedent served as a blueprint for additional ceramic artworks, transforming architectural elements into dynamic artistic displays and fostering synergy within the local art community. Crucially, the author's direct involvement as an architect in the project provided a unique participant-observation perspective, offering immersive, first-hand insights into the project's entire lifecycle. The research followed a multi-stage approach:

#### Literature Review

This phase established a robust theoretical groundwork by reviewing existing literature on architectural theory, public art, place identity, and knowledge management. It also involved investigating previous studies on the impact of public art installations, particularly within public buildings. This comprehensive review was essential for grounding the case study in established academic discourse.

#### Data Collection

Data collection was conducted using immersive and systematic methods. **Participant-observation** was a primary method, given my direct involvement as an architect in the project from June 2022 to September 2024. This entailed direct participation in the planning, design, and implementation of *'The*

*Ceiling Painting*,' with meticulous field notes taken to document decision-making and collaborative dynamics. This provided a unique, first-hand perspective on the project's entire lifecycle. The research also included a **visual analysis** of documentation, such as architectural drawings, design sketches, and photographs. The analysis focused on key elements like composition, color, materiality, and the project's spatial impact.

#### Analysis and Synthesis

This phase focuses on interpreting the collected data and drawing conclusions. A **thematic analysis** was performed on the qualitative data to identify patterns and insights related to the project's influence on space, identity, and community engagement. This included analyzing how *'The Ceiling Painting'* and its architectural elements influenced the public building and the perceived identity of the space. Finally, the findings from the literature review and case study analysis were synthesized to articulate evidence-based guidelines for future public building development that encourages public engagement.

## 4. The Case Study: 'The ceiling' and Its Extensions

### 4.1 Conceptualizing and Implementing *'The Ceiling Painting'*



**Figure 4** The ceiling painting Sketch called *"Culture in Season"* by Artist Mongkhon Glintub

The *'The Ceiling Painting'*, titled *"Culture in Season,"* was designed by artist Mongkhon Glintub to narrate the annual cycle of local culture and activities (Figure 4). This artistic expression rigorously synthesizes traditional cultural narratives with the contemporary lived experiences of the building's users. The painting's evocative imagery is explicitly designed to facilitate viewer engagement through culturally resonant local motifs, thereby fostering a dialogue between the macro-architectural intervention and individual user perception. The chosen medium, acrylic paint, was selected for its pragmatic benefits, specifically facilitating ease of maintenance and repair, with precise color codes provided to the building owner for future reference, ensuring the artwork's long-term sustainability within the academic environment.

The strategic placement of *'The Ceiling Painting'* within the building's primary circulation nexus—specifically its proximity to the main entrance, stairwell, and elevator (Figure 5: Floor plan showing position;

Figure 6: Section drawing showing position)—critically amplifies its visual prominence. This deliberate positioning transcends mere aesthetic enhancement; it reinforces the artwork's function as a unifying and orienting element for the entire academic community, establishing a seamless spatial and symbolic continuity between interior and exterior domains. Through its distinct chromatic, textural, and material qualities, *'The Ceiling Painting'* establishes a unique spatial dimension. It functions not merely as decoration but as a potent symbolic representation of the place, responsively engaging with the needs of its inhabitants and instrumental in fostering a sense of public identification. Beyond its inherent decorative function, this artistic ceiling profoundly enhances the aesthetic appeal of the space, thereby activating novel aesthetic experiences among individuals and enriching their daily interaction with the built environment.

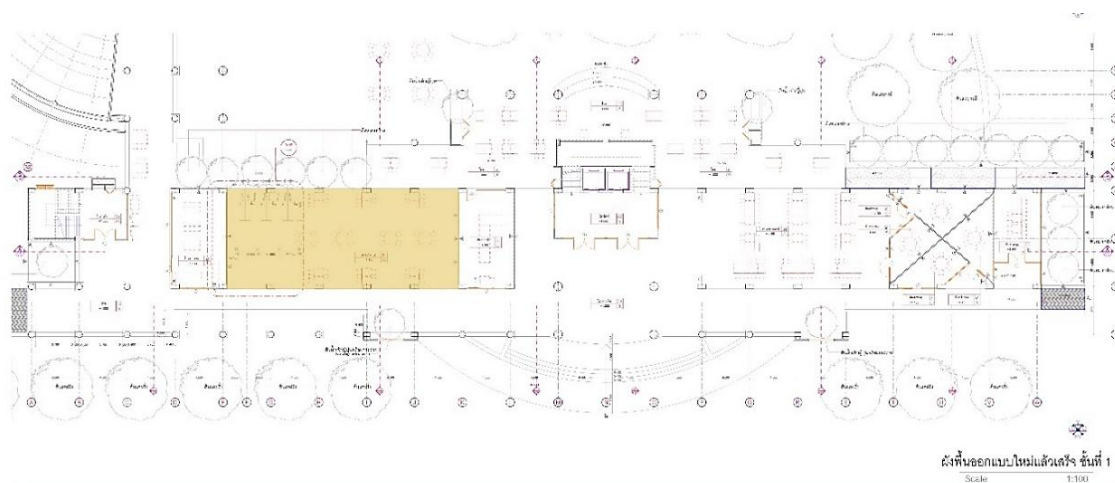


**Figure 5** *The main activity hall is the location of The ceiling in the renovation project of the Faculty of Business Administration Building*

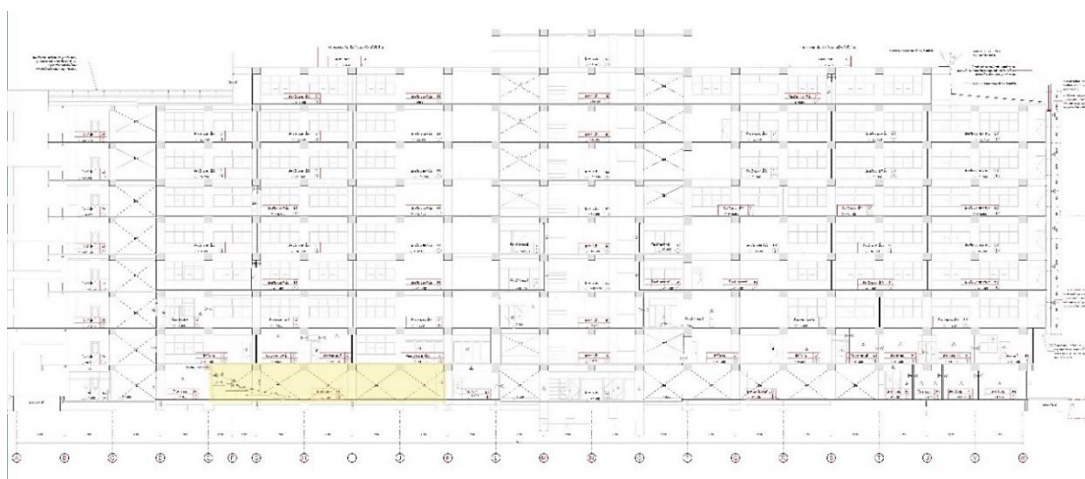


**Figure 6** *The section drawing provides a detailed illustration of The Ceiling's position within the building.*

#### 4.2 Extending the Vision: The Ceramic Wall Collaboration

The profound internalization and affirmative reception of *'The Ceiling Painting'* by members of the Faculty of Business Administration served as the impetus for an organic extension of this artistic initiative

(Figure 7). The unique painting, having established a strong conceptual and aesthetic precedent, consequently served as a blueprint, leading to the creation of additional ceramic artworks on the walls adjacent to 'The Ceiling Painting' and in proximity to the stairwell and elevator. This systematic expansion further enhances the overall aesthetic coherence of the area.



**Figure 7** A ceramic artist's sketch serves as the initial blueprint for a future ceramic piece. Dr. Anirut Pipatprapa is a dean standing amidst ceramic artists at a workshop in Dan Kwian village

This innovative approach transforms architectural elements into dynamic artistic displays, fostering robust collaboration between ceramic artists from the university's art department and skilled ceramic craft technicians. Many of these craft technicians are esteemed alumni from Dan Kwian, a renowned pottery village in Nakhon Ratchasima. This collaborative endeavor not only qualitatively enriches the resultant artworks but also actively cultivates a broader synergy within Nakhon Ratchasima's art community, thereby augmenting the building's distinctive identity and promoting tangibly to the region's cultural vibrancy (Figure 8: Ceramic art piece showing repeated pattern; Figure 9: Position of the Ceramic Wall).

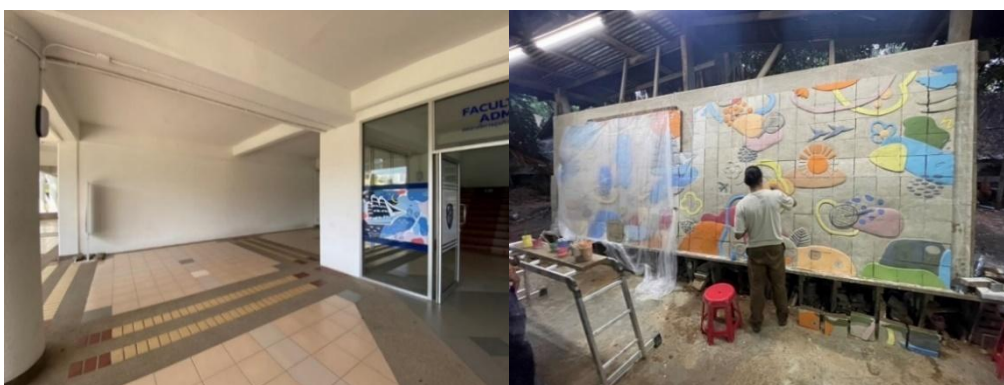


**Figure 8** The ceramic art piece, featuring a repeated pattern inspired by The ceiling, will be permanently installed on the wall. During a workshop in Dan Kwian village, participants are actively engaged in the creation of ceramic art pieces.

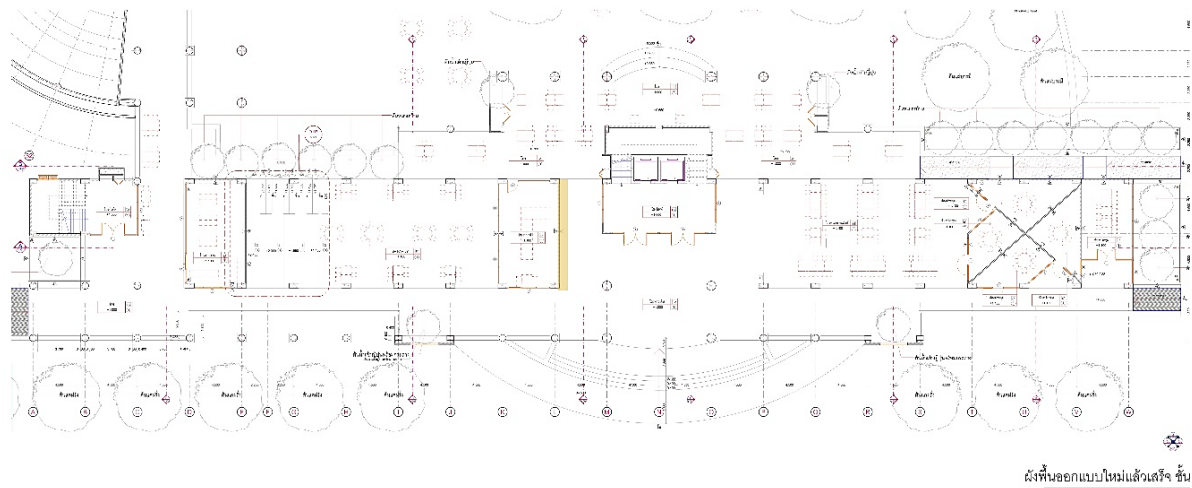


**Figure 9** *The Position of the Ceramic Wall is close to the main stair and elevator of the Faculty of Business Administration Building*

## 5. Results and Discussion

### 5.1 A New Visual Narrative Beyond Modernist Function

*'The Ceiling Painting'* successfully redefines the relationship between art and architecture within the BA building. Its large-scale, biomorphic design, rendered in a palette of soft blues, oranges, pinks, and greens, and featuring motifs such as a sailing vessel, avifauna, celestial bodies, and botanical elements (as depicted in Figures 10 and 11), presents a striking aesthetic counterpoint to the characteristically functional and often austere rectilinear forms prevalent in Modernist academic architecture.

This aesthetic choice directly addresses the critique that Modernism often neglected nuanced societal communication and cultural expression. By infusing the space with a delight visual narrative that connects to local cultural expressions – a critical aspect functionalist approaches often overlook – the intervention transforms a traditionally overlooked overhead plane into a dynamic visual landscape. This redefines the architectural experience of the main hall, shaping the emotional and spatial experience of its occupants, and affirming that architecture can be both functional and deeply evocative. Ultimately, *'The Ceiling Painting'* functions as a significant and innovative feature that redefines the relationship between art and the built environment within the Faculty of Business Administration.



**Figure 10** *Acrylic painting on The Ceiling of the main hall seamlessly connects between the interior and exterior spaces*

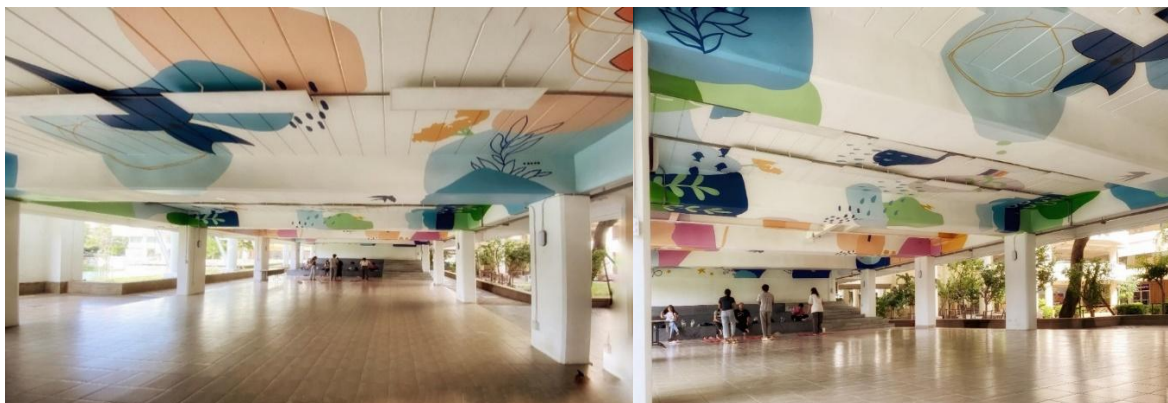


**Figure 11** *The Ceiling design not only contributes to the overall aesthetic appeal of the building but also enhances the atmosphere for students*

## 5.2 Cultivating a Distinctive Identity and Stimulating Ambiance

The artwork's unique visual language, with its deliberate departure from Modernist austerity (as discussed in Section 5.1), imbues the Faculty of Business Administration with a memorable character that sets it apart from generic institutional structures both within RMUTl and beyond. This highly recognizable focal point fosters a stronger sense of pride and ownership among students and faculty, enhancing their psychological connection to the building and aligning with theories of place identity. The resulting ambiance is consistently perceived as more welcoming, less formal, and notably more stimulating for creative thought—a valuable asset for a faculty dedicated to fostering innovation.

Furthermore, the artistic elements within *'The Ceiling Painting'* inspire various creative pursuits, extending into profound practical applications. Exposure to the abstract and imaginative qualities of *'The Ceiling Painting'* and its biomorphic motifs is posited to stimulate divergent thinking, fostering the non-linear approaches crucial for innovative business solutions. This visual stimulus encourages occupants to break

from conventional thought patterns, an essential cognitive shift for complex problem-solving in a dynamic business landscape.

### 5.3 Catalyzing Creativity, Collaboration, and Institutional Branding

The project has served as a tangible catalyst for interdisciplinary collaboration, encouraging dialogue between business students and their peers in art and design faculties. The subsequent ceramic wall art, born from collaboration with local artisans, further exemplifies this cross-disciplinary synergy.

More than just an aesthetic piece, *'The Ceiling Painting'* has evolved into a unique and powerful branding element for the Faculty and RMUTU as a whole. It symbolizes the institution's modern outlook and its commitment to holistic education that values both rigorous analytical thought and creative ingenuity. This is tangibly evidenced by the development of bespoke products such as T-shirts, notebooks, and umbrellas featuring the artwork's design (Figures 12, 13), which are showcased at public venues and worn by university leadership. This initiative directly connects the artistic intervention to broader university identity, outreach, and community engagement strategies, consistent with the idea of public art contributing to place image (Lynch, 1960).



Figure 12 The BA products are showcased in a display at The Mall shopping mall in Nakhon Ratchasima



Figure 13 BA's Notebook is a product inspired by Art in Architecture

## 6. Conclusion

This study of *'The Ceiling Painting'* compellingly demonstrates that integrating public art into an architectural renovation can produce transformative results far beyond simple aesthetic enhancement. The project serves as a robust case study for how art can foster identity, inspire creativity, and strengthen community engagement within an academic institution. In returning to the initial research objectives, this study concludes the following:

**Regarding the first objective:** The analysis confirms that *'The Ceiling Painting'* transcends its utilitarian function. This deliberate artistic intervention transforms a traditionally overlooked overhead surface into a dynamic visual landscape, actively reshaping the spatial and emotional experience of the main hall. By imbuing a functional space with narrative, cultural resonance, and profound meaning, it actively realizes Norberg-Schulz's (1980) concept of architecture as embodying meaning and shaping human experience.

**Addressing the second objective:** The project has been instrumental in cultivating the building's unique identity and ambiance. By providing a memorable and emotionally resonant focal point, the artwork fosters a strong sense of place and ownership among its users, making the environment more welcoming and stimulating. The analysis unequivocally demonstrates *'The Ceiling Painting'* crucial role in cultivating a distinctive ambiance and contributing significantly to the building's identity. This unique aesthetic, by creating a highly recognizable and emotionally resonant focal point, fosters a stronger sense of pride and ownership among students and faculty (Figures 14), thereby enhancing their psychological connection to the building and, by extension, to RMUTI itself.



**Figure 14** *The faculty members of the Faculty of Business Administration sport distinctive T-shirts shows to the result of knowledge management*

This directly aligns with theories of place identity (Proshansky et al., 1983; Relph, 1976), which emphasize the deep emotional and cognitive bonds individuals form with physical settings. The resultant ambiance is consistently perceived as more welcoming, less overtly formal, and notably more stimulating for creative thought—a valuable asset for a business administration faculty aiming to cultivate innovative

approaches. Furthermore, the art piece serves as a tangible manifestation of successful interdisciplinary collaboration, actively encouraging cross-disciplinary dialogues between business students and their counterparts in arts or design faculties. This blurs traditional academic boundaries and exemplifies a holistic approach to education, further extended by the subsequent ceramic wall art born from the collaboration between the art department and skilled local artisans (Figures 7, 8).

**Finally, concerning the third objective:** The artwork has generated tangible benefits and inspired creative pursuits. It has catalyzed interdisciplinary collaboration, provided a foundation for institutional branding and marketing through associated products, and served as a powerful model for effective knowledge management within the university. The implementation of *'The Ceiling Painting'* service project within the BA building design has fundamentally contributed to knowledge management across various dimensions within RMUTL. This project has provided concrete, experiential opportunities for students and faculty to explore complex interrelationships between art, architecture, and administration. By synergistically integrating creative expression with practical business considerations, a robust model for collaborative innovation and dynamic knowledge management has been developed, offering potential applicability across other faculties and university-wide initiatives.

While this study provides a robust qualitative analysis of the project's impact, its primary limitation is the absence of comprehensive quantitative data. Future research is critically needed to empirically measure the specific impact of such aesthetic and creative interventions on user learning outcomes, behavioral patterns, and productivity. Such research could employ methods such as pre/post surveys, controlled experiments, or observational studies with relevant metrics to ascertain whether these interventions demonstrably influence academic engagement and overall well-being within the built environment. It is crucial to assess how students, faculty, and staff directly perceive and respond to the creative, beautiful, and aesthetic qualities of the paintings and whether these experiences demonstrably influence their work output, academic engagement, and overall well-being. This empirical investigation would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term benefits and implications of such pioneering public art integrations in educational architecture.

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